

# Member Spotlight: Lauren Mechaly

By Katherine Carpenter

**Q: Where are you from?**

**A:** I was born in Manhattan, but I grew up in New Jersey.

**Q: Where is your favorite place you have traveled to?**

**A:** Israel

**Q: What led you to work in the field of elder law and special needs planning?**

**A:** I fell into it. I concentrated in labor and employment law in law school but hated it in practice. In my third year I worked in the Civil Rights and Disabilities clinic at Albany Law School. Through the clinic, I worked on two cases involving special education litigation and decided I wanted to focus my practice in that area. I began my practice at Littman Krooks, which is where I learned elder law and special needs planning.

**Q: Did you have a turning point in your career?**

**A:** I have been fortunate to work for some of the best in the business, and I credit my time with these professionals (they know who they are!) as a turning point in my professional life. They taught me how to be a lawyer, and how to develop the skills that they do not teach you in law school.

**Q: What is your favorite part about your job?**

**A:** The client interaction. I love that we, as trusts and estates and elder law attorneys, can develop relationships with families over years and, sometimes, generations. Every day is different, which is what makes this practice area exciting and challenging.

**Q: Tell me about an accomplishment that you consider to be the most significant in your career thus far.**

**A:** Sitting for the CELA (Certified Elder Law Attorney) exam and passing it! This is one of my greatest professional accomplishments.

**Q: Where do you see yourself in 5 years?**

**A:** I hope to still be practicing in this area. I love what we do as elder law attorneys, and I am so grateful to have found this practice. I practice in New York and New Jersey and so I hope to continue building my network in both states.

**Q: What did you want to be when you were younger?**

**A:** A lawyer!



**Q: Tell me a little about your family.**

**A:** I have four kids ages 9, 7, 5 and 2. My husband and I were high school sweethearts. He is Moroccan so my children learned to understand French at a young age. They also understand Spanish and speak Hebrew. My husband works in the nursing home industry, so we have very exciting dinner table conversations!

**Q: Are there hobbies you look forward to outside of work?**

**A:** We are football fans, so we spend Sundays in the fall cheering on the Jets. We are also very involved with our synagogue. Our “adult life” is on hold while we focus on our kids, but we travel as much as we can as a family and try to focus on experiences for them. I also try to read a little bit every day and have started going back to the theatre now that my girls are into it!

**Q: Do you have any advice to give?**

**A:** My best advice for a young lawyer is to figure out what type of attorney you want to be. Find an area of practice that you can build and then work to figure out a path for yourself within that practice. Stay true to your goals and don't try to fit the mold of who you think you should be. Be you!

**Q: Is there anything else you want people to know about you?**

**A:** I was a competitive gymnast in high school!